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TAGS: OFDP CG UN

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE ABOUT DEBT

REF: A. USUN 00548
 B. SECSTATE 112594

Classified By: Classified By: Amb Alejandro Wolff for reasons
¶1. 4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (U) As instructed, USUN/HC met DRC PermRep Atoki Ileka on Monday, August 27, to discuss the almost \$140K debt now owed to landlord Vornado Realty Trust for the Mission's UN offices at 866 UN Plaza, Suite 511. After listening to the concerns of the Department and the warning that USUN/Department of State might have to consider downsizing the mission, as it did in 1998 when the mission had accrued tremendous debt, Amb. Ileka described the problems he had experienced in getting funding from Kinshasa. He stated that financial support from his capital began to wane around the time of last year's elections.

¶2. (C) Ambassador Ileka described the new government as "elephantine" with sixty ministers, and said that it seemed to have become difficult for the Minister of Budget and the Foreign Minister (a former rebel leader) to focus on and respond to his many requests for consistent monthly funding for operations in New York and other foreign posts. Amb. Ileka revealed that he has been forced to circumvent the usual funding pathways and was now in direct contact with the President's office on the issue. He said that he had solicited a strongly worded letter from Vornado and added that it would be helpful if the US Mission could send a diplomatic note that contained the points expressed in the meeting so that he could use it as further ammunition. He wanted to impress upon his capital the need to resolve this debt before the President and delegation arrived in NY for the high-level session of the UNGA in late September. As per Amb. Ileka's request, USUN/HC is currently preparing a Diplomatic Note to send to the DRC UN Mission.

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